



Los Angeles County Regional Park And Open Space District

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November 12, 2014

The Honorable Board of Directors
County of Los Angeles
Regional Park and Open Space District
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

**ALLOCATE SPECIFIED EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE FIRST
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT TO THE MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY AND AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION
OF A GRANT TO THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY FOR THE LOS ANGELES PLAZA PARK
GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
(FIRST DISTRICT)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 in unspent Specified Excess Funds, available to the First Supervisorial District, to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a grant to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority for general improvements to the Los Angeles Plaza Park.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Find the proposed Los Angeles Plaza Park General Improvements Project categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated herein and the reasons reflected in the record of the project.
2. Allocate an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 in unspent Specified Excess Funds, available to the First Supervisorial District, to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for a grant to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the proposed Los Angeles Plaza Park General Improvements Project.

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as the Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant after the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority assigns its right to apply to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and if applicable conditions have been met, and to administer the grant as of the date of this action and pursuant to procedures in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects; otherwise, funds shall remain in the Excess Funds account.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 in unspent Specified Excess Funds, available to the First Supervisorial District, pursuant to the Los Angeles County Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 (1996 Proposition), to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for a grant to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) for the proposed Los Angeles Plaza Park General Improvements (Project).

Metro is a transportation planner and coordinator, designer, builder and operator. Its mission is to provide continuous improvement of an efficient and effective transportation system for the County of Los Angeles.

The proposed Project involves general improvements to the Los Angeles Plaza Park, also known as Father Serra Park, to expand its connections to neighboring areas. The scope of work includes renovation of existing landscaping, enhancement of the existing crosswalk, and development of a pathway through the park that links directly to the enhanced crosswalks, connecting El Pueblo's Central Plaza and Union Station.

The overall project cost is estimated at \$1,227,000. The recommended Specified Excess Funds will be supplemented with \$227,000 from Metro's Lease Revenues.

MRCA, which is the designated recipient of Specified Excess Funds for projects along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, will assign its right to apply for the funds to Metro.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (Director), in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, be authorized to award the grant after MRCA assigns the right to apply to Metro and only if applicable conditions have been met. Applicable conditions include grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreement with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the project. It is further recommended that the Director be authorized to administer the grant pursuant to the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects previously approved by the Board.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions will further the Board-approved County Strategic Plan Goal of Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1) by improving and enhancing recreational activities in the First Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the Excess Funds grant, in the amount of \$1,000,000, is budgeted in the First Supervisorial District's portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's (RPOSD) Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. MRCA and Metro each meets this requirement.

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining, each fiscal year, the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grant will be funded from the Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District for Specified projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director will be authorized to award grants when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

On June 2, 2009, the Board approved the Procedural Guide to govern the administration of RPOSD grants. The Procedural Guide will appropriately govern the administration of the recommended grant as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All public agency projects funded by RPOSD are required to comply with CEQA as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The City of Los Angeles is the lead agency for the proposed Project.

The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA. The Project, which includes renovation of existing landscaping, enhancement of the existing crosswalk, and development of a pathway through the park that links directly to the enhanced crosswalks, is within certain classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment in that it meets the criteria set forth in Sections 15301(c)(h) and 15304(a)(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 1(j)(x) and 4(a)(c) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the Project provides for maintenance of existing landscaping; enhancement of existing streets; minor alterations to land; and installation of new landscaping.

The proposed Project will not involve the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees. Additionally, the proposed Project is not in a sensitive environment, and there are no cumulative impacts, unusual circumstances, or other limiting factors that would make the exemption inapplicable based on the proposed Project's records.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

A Grant Project Agreement will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director, and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009 only if all applicable

conditions of the grant have been met. The Project Agreement will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The recommended actions will have no impact on any other projects funded by RPOSD, but are required for the enhancement of safe and accessible recreational opportunities in the First Supervisorial District.

CONCLUSION

Please return one adopted copy of this letter to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects/Debt Management Division, and one to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Russ Guiney", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

RUSS GUINEY

Director

RG:JB:WRO:tb

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors